

Appl. No. 10/603,337
Atty. Docket No. 2003B065
Amdmt. dated February 9, 2006
Reply to Office Action of November 9, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Status and Request for Reconsideration

Reconsideration of this application is requested. The claims submitted for reconsideration are claims 1 - 50. The claims are not amended.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

All claims stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent 6,838,587 (Lattner) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,403,854 (Miller). This rejection is traversed and reconsideration requested.

Applicants note that this application and Lattner were, at the time the invention of this application was made, owned by ExxonMobil Chemical Patents, Inc. Therefore, Lattner is disqualified from being used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) against the claims of this application. See 35 U.S.C. § 103(c)(1) and MPEP 706.02(l)(2).

Miller discloses a process for recovering heat and removing impurities from a reactor effluent stream. Miller includes both heat exchangers and quench towers for removing heat from a reactor effluent stream. An alkaline stream is added to the quench medium used in the first quench tower to neutralize organic acids. Miller does not describe or suggest using an alkaline stream at any other location downstream from the first quench tower. In particular, Miller does not contact the overhead output stream produced by the first quench tower with an alkaline stream at any later point. Additionally, Miller makes no mention of removing carbon dioxide from the overhead output stream produced by a quench tower.

The Miller process differs from the claimed invention in that Miller does not disclose contacting a quenched effluent stream with an alkaline stream to remove at least a portion of the carbon dioxide. The quenched effluent stream of claims 1 and 14 corresponds to an output stream comprising the olefins produced during an oxygenate to olefin reaction. This quenched effluent stream is then contacted with an alkaline stream. The only stream in Miller that potentially corresponds to this quenched effluent stream is the overhead output stream from the first quench tower. As noted above, Miller does not describe or suggest contacting such an overhead output stream with an alkaline stream. Similarly, Claim 27 requires quenching a

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reactor effluent stream at a pH of from about 7.1 to 11 to produce a quenched effluent stream, and then washing the quenched effluent stream with an alkaline stream at a pH of 13 or greater. Miller does not describe or suggest washing a quenched effluent stream with an alkaline stream of any type. Finally, claim 38 requires quenching an effluent stream to separate a majority of the water and a first portion of the carbon dioxide from the effluent stream, and then separating a second portion of carbon dioxide from the effluent stream. As noted above, Miller does not describe or suggest removing a second portion of carbon dioxide from an effluent stream.

The noted differences between the Miller process and the claimed process are significant. Accordingly, there is no suggestion by Miller that Applicants' claimed process would have been obvious.

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CONCLUSION

Having demonstrated that all rejections of claims have been overcome, this application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants request early and favorable reconsideration in the form of a Notice of Allowance.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated, since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response. Please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1712 (Docket #: 2003B065).

Respectfully submitted,



Frank E. Reid
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 37,918

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Post Office Address (to which correspondence is to be sent):
ExxonMobil Chemical Company
Law Technology
P.O. Box 2149
Baytown, Texas 77522-2149
Telephone No. (281) 834-1743
Facsimile No. (281) 834-2495